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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/637,973	08/08/2003	Kenneth E. DeLine	VMA-LockingHangUSNProv	4109
39208	7590	11/01/2004	EXAMINER	
CR MILES, P.C. 1 OLD TOWN SQUARE, SUITE 200 B FORT COLLINS, CO 80524			SZUMNY, JONATHON A	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

3632

DATE MAILED: 11/01/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/637,973

Applicant(s)

DELINE, KENNETH E.

Examiner

Jon A Szumny

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 August 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 69-85 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 69-81, 82/80, 84 and 85 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 82/81, 83 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 December 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 8/8/03.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

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This is the first office action for application number 10/637,973, Self-Interlocking Hanger System, filed on August 8, 2003.

Priority

Domestic priority of application number 60/402,117 filed on August 8, 2002 is acknowledged.

Information Disclosure Statement

Receipt is acknowledged of Form PTO-1449, Information Disclosure Statement, which has been reviewed by the Examiner.

Claim Objections

Claims 70-85 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claims 70-85, line 1, "A" should be --The--;

In claim 81, line 2, "to said" should be --said--.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter that the applicant regards as his invention.

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Claims 71, 72 and 76-78 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 71 and 72 recite the limitation "said catch element engagement surface" in lines 4-5. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims.

Claim 72 refers back to itself. For the purposes of this office action, the Examiner will assume claim 72 refers back to claim 71.

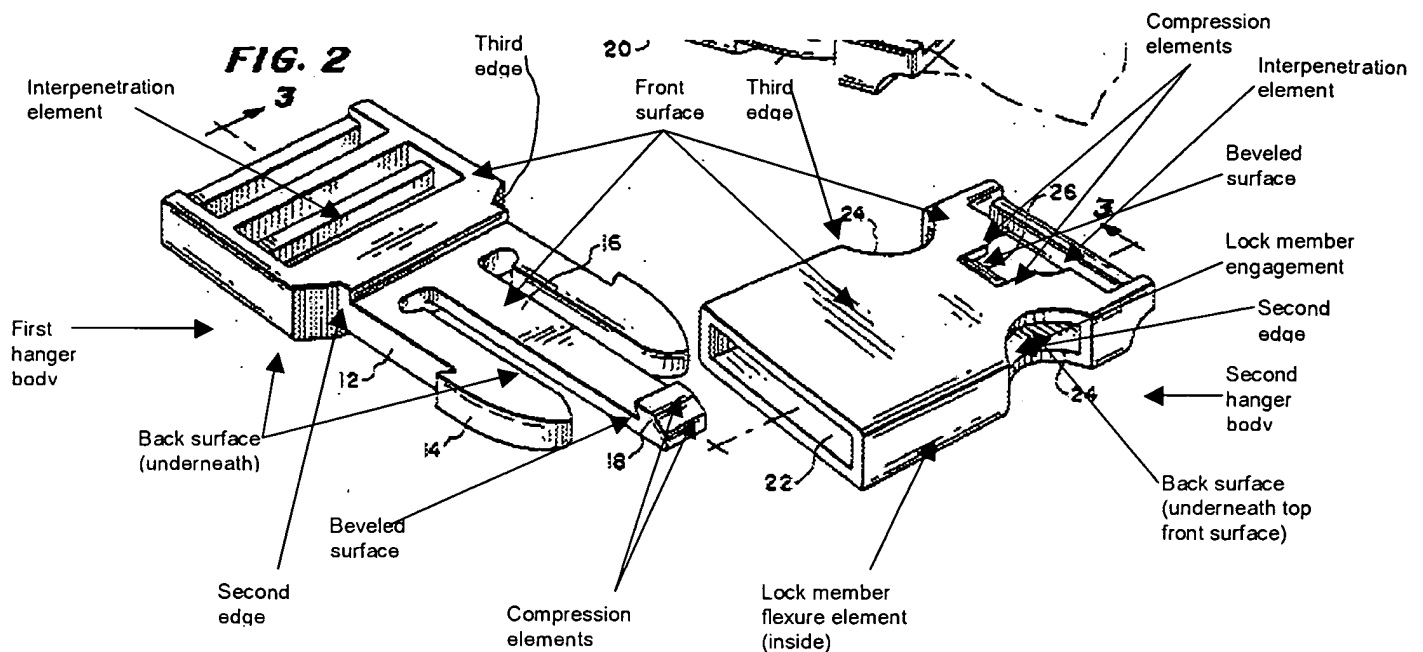
Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 69-71, 73-81, 82/80, 84 and 85 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent number 4,825,515 to Wolterstorff, Jr.



Wolterstorff, Jr. '515 discloses a hanger (above) comprising a first hanger body (above) having a front surface and a back surface (above) that terminate in a first edge having a beveled surface (above); at least one lock member (12) which extends from said first hanger body; a second hanger body (above) having a front surface and a back surface which terminate in an edge having a beveled surface (above), wherein said beveled surface of said first hanger body and said beveled surface of said second hanger body are configured to engage in opposed mated relation; wherein the at least one lock member engagement (above) has a surface configured to engage the at least one lock member to establish locked securement of the first hanger body to the second hanger body in opposed mated relation; wherein the lock member comprises a resiliently flexible projection which terminates in a catch element (14); wherein the lock member engagement comprises a lock member flexure element (above) which slidingly engages the catch element to generate flexure of said resiliently flexible projection

sufficient to allow the catch element to engage the catch element engagement surface; wherein the front surface and the back surface of said first hanger body terminate in a second edge (above) and a third edge (above) and wherein the at least one lock member comprises two lock members (12, both sides) one each extending from the second edge and the third edge; wherein the front surface and the back surface of the second hanger body further terminates in a second edge (above) and a third edge and wherein the at least one lock member engagement comprises each of the second edge and the third edge configured to provide one each lock member engagement; wherein the hanger further comprises a compression element (above, inherently, this element could be involved in the compression of some item/object) which projects from the beveled surface of the first hanger body, and a compression element (above, inherently, this element could be involved in the compression of some item/object) which projects from the beveled surface of the second hanger body; wherein the compression element which projects from the beveled surface of the first hanger body and the compression element which projects from the beveled surface of said second hanger body each comprise a single continuous compression element which projects from each beveled surface; wherein the compression element which projects from the beveled surface of the first hanger body and the compression element which projects from the beveled surface of the second hanger body each comprise a pair of compression elements (above) which project from each beveled surface, wherein each of the continuous compression elements further comprise an inclined surface (inherently, it is inclined relative to some reference point) which intersects each beveled surface, wherein an

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interpenetration element (above, inherently, each could be interpenetrated by some object/item) is between the front surface and back surface of each of the first and second hanger bodies.

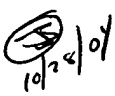
Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 72 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, set forth in this Office action and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 82/81 and 83 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter:

Regarding claim 72, the prior art as previously applied against claim 71 failed to further specifically teach the lock member flexure element to maintain an amount of flexure in the resiliently flexible projection during locked securement of the catch element with the catch element engagement surface.

 Regarding claim 82, the prior art as previously applied against claim 81 failed to further specifically teach each compression element which projects from the beveled surface to further comprise an inclined surface which intersects each beveled surface.

Regarding claim 83, the prior art as previously applied against claim 81 failed to further specifically teach a lateral adjustment projection to be coupled to the beveled

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surface of the first hanger body, and a pair of lateral adjustment stops to be coupled to the beveled surface of the second hanger body, whereby the lateral adjustment element travels between the pair of lateral adjustment stops.

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Taylor '799, Gano '216, Yuda '759, Ortega '619, Ida '792 and Vuorinen '969 teach various hanger devices including flexure elements and beveled surfaces.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Jon A Szumny whose telephone number is (703) 306-3403. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday 8-4.

The fax phone number for the organization where this application and proceeding are assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1113.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Szumny', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Jon Szumny
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 3600
Art Unit 3632
October 28, 2004